

Cape's first ethical seal wines

17 Sep 2012 by Jancis Robinson

Last week the identities of the first tranche of wines carrying South Africa's new, fully traceable, [ethical seal](#) were revealed. The seal is awarded to individual wines rather than wineries so that producers are free to continue the South African tradition of buying grapes from a variety of sources. The first 25 wines to be awarded the seal are listed below and are made variously by such significant exporters as Diemel, Durbanville Hills, Fairview, Robertson Winery and Spier, suggesting that the seals have been applied to meet criteria required by customers in foreign markets. The Scandinavian monopolies are known to be particularly concerned about the issue of working conditions in South Africa's vineyards.

The scheme is being monitored by the not-for-profit Wine and Agricultural Industry Ethical Trade Association (WEETA). To be awarded the new seal, the winery producers must have followed the WEETA code based on the International Labour Convention's Ethical Trading Initiative and South African labour legislation. According to Wines of South Africa, this code 'prohibits the use of child labour, and ensures that employment is freely chosen with all employees working within a healthy and safe environment. The code also states that workers should have the right to freedom of association, a living wage and to be protected from unfair discrimination. Worker housing and workers security rights should also be respected.'

Every wine has to be individually audited with at least 60% of the wine coming from a WEETA-recognised supplier and the other 40% from a supplier who can prove they are meeting WEETA accreditation within a year. The seal may be used for one year after which the producer will have to renew the agreement annually for subsequent vintages. WEETA is involved in a producer training programme designed to help the major brands achieve accreditation for the 2012 vintage. The thorough audit aim is to have all South African producers accredited with the new seal by 2015.

Head of Wines of South Africa Su Birch, a prime mover behind this initiative, commented about the first producers of wines with an ethical seal, 'they are the trailblazers who are setting an important precedent for the industry in its efforts to fast-track the implementation of fair labour practices on wine farms and in cellars.' The scheme is designed to work in parallel with Fair Trade and Fair for Life accreditations.

The ethically sealed wines will be shown at Cape Wine 2012 in Cape Town later this month from which our very own Richard Hemming will be reporting.

The following wines have been approved to carry the ethical seal.

Distell:

Place in the Sun

Cabernet Sauvignon 2011

Shiraz 2011

Tukulu

Tukulu Syrah unwooded 2009

Tukulu Cabernet Sauvignon 2011

Tukulu Pinotage 2010

Tukulu Chenin Blanc 2012

Durbanville Hills:

Sauvignon Blanc 2012

Rhinofields Pinotage 2011

Fairview:

Fairview

Fairview Chenin Blanc 2012

Fairview Durif 2010

Fairview Nurok 2011

Fairview Shiraz 2010

La Capra

La Capra Chenin Blanc 2012

La Capra Malbec 2011

Spice Route

Spice Route Sauvignon Blanc 2012

Spice Route Chenin Blanc 2012

Spice Route Mourvèdre 2009

Leuwerijck

Leuwerijck 2012

Robertson Winery:
Cabernet Sauvignon 2011
Chardonnay 2012
Chenin Blanc 2012
Merlot 2012
Pinotage 2011
Shiraz 2011

Spier:

Frederik's Wine Shop Mourvèdre 2010
Frederik's Wine Shop Chenin Blanc 2012

